Barmen, Rhenish Provinces, Prussia
Sept 20. 1843 (3

Dear Brethren,

Your letter has rejoiced & animated our hearts. The fellowship of the saints is a precious blessing. Although separated as to the body by mountains, valleys & seas, we are still one in our heavenly Bridegroom & Lord & Head. We have one aim, one end before our eyes, that is to seek his honor - to make it known & thereby to extend his kingdom & to set up his banner everywhere. We would have answered your most acceptable letter immediately but it came too late to hand in so far as that when we saw that it was not possible to answer it before the beginning of your vacation we resolved to wait because in the course of this summer two brothers ~~came~~ were to travel on a visit to your country & we could send an answer by them. These two brethren now take their departure having in view the preaching of the gospel of Christ to our countrymen settled in your land. Their names are William Smith & Henry Goehe. - You wish to know the state of the kingdom of God among us - what ~~its prospects seem to be~~ hour of its day it is.

We can say nothing else than that it appears to us, that the day is far spent. Faith & unbelief are both growing in strength. In our own valley, it is true, our prospects thank God, are tolerably good. We inhabit one of the most favored spots, if not the very most favored in all Germany. We number in our valley 14 evangelical ministers with 6 churches. One of these, Pastor Krummacher is already known in your country. Our churches have all Presbyterical government. They choose their ministers themselves which is not the case over all Germany. It is moreover beyond question true that it is of the utmost profit to the Church of Christ that each congregation acting for itself should administer its own affairs rather than be under a kind of Hierarchy. You may well believe therefore that the promise of our God (Is:

3'5', 10-11) is among us also in the process of fulfilment. It is altogether impossible that the preaching of the gospel by so many true witnesses should be unblest.

Although, moreover, the in our valley the people of the Lord form the smaller number still the above mentioned opinion is confirmed by the fact that there are many Christian societies in our valley which are all laboring, in their different spheres, to advance the kingdom of God. A most useful auxiliary here is a Bible & Mission Society, as you already know. We have also a Temperance Society here which owes its establishment partly to your country. Not long since there was also a society formed for the in aid of poor Protestant churches in Popish countries. A society has for several years been formed for the spread of the gospel among the Germans in your country, which still has its office about two hours distance from this place. Another auxiliary means is important auxiliary is a society for the building up of God's kingdom among the descendants of Israel. See, dearly beloved brethren, these are some of the fruits of the good tree, which our ever-blessed Savior through the power of his word in the hearts of his people has planted here & in our neighborhood. His name be glorified! The Bible & Mission Society in our valley were the first in Germany, although our Seminary was founded after the Seminary in Basel. Our society sent in the year 1829 its first missionaries to South-Africa; the present state of our mission you can learn from the Account that accompanies this; we have only to remark in addition that since the preparation of this account two new stations in South Africa have been founded. There are at present 10 young men in our Seminary who are prepared for the ministry of the gospel among the heathen. This is an uncommonly small number. Formerly our number rose to 14 or 15.

We are under the direction of two learned & pious preceptors who instruct us in those necessary branches of knowledge. In each year 3 or 4 of us are sent into

the field of labor to gather for our dear Savior the reward of his sufferings. You wish also to know how the Sabbath day is kept among us. ~~How is this~~ We must distinguish in that matter between different persons. Those who are evangelical honor the Sabbath. They use it for the honor of their Redeemer & for the advancement of their own & others' sanctification. Those who have known nothing yet of the gospel in its greatness, seek to satisfy the longings of their hearts with the goods of this world, for which also occasions enough occur to them. There is with us a somewhat freer mode of regarding the Sabbath than with you. The most respected Christians here agree that the hallowing of the Sabbath ought to be considered not as a divine commandment, but that it is a beautiful arrangement of the Christian Church in order to preserve & promote order, wherein she, though not without the leading of the Holy Ghost, has chosen this particular day. This freer also confirms itself throughout the gospel. For Christ is the end of the whole law, even of the law of the Sabbath. & the law has no more binding power than it has received from the apostles in the New Testament. You wish also, dear brethren, to hear something of the state of theology in our native land. In regard to this point we can very cheerfully inform you. Since 25 years ago a new Christian life has been awakened among our theologians. Many of them, that is among the younger of them, recognize the word of God as their highest treasure & their highest wisdom, & witness before the whole world that no other name is given to men, wherein they can be saved, than the name of Jesus Christ. Thereby there has also awakened again in our people much new, warm & active Christian life, especially in contrast with former times.

But, Brethren, also in this can we recognize a clear token that the day of the Lord is at hand. As Israel & Judah tottered toward their overthrow, the Lord raised up a great company of witnesses — in the first instance the prophets, & in the second instance the apostles. May it not be the same case now. For a truly great number of contenders are ~~also~~ active in the contest in our native land, not only preachers but also a number of evangelical professors. Unbelief & superstition also are boldly lifting up their heads. Papism, Rationalism & philosophical Radicalism advance with a bold front against the gospel, insult the heart

of the Church & seek by every means to prepare the way of the Man of Sin, the Son of Perdition. No one can tell how great the injury they do. But He who dwelleth in heaven laughs at them & the Lord has them in derision. They must also on their part contribute to advance the kingdom of God. For they cause many hypocrites to throw off the mask & turn their backs upon the hated gospel, & so the true church is gradually more & more purified. We can indeed relate nothing of great & general revivals in our country, which in countries more new have taken place; it is ever the case that only individuals one by one are brought out from the world. The visits of the Spirit in our case are like the showers of rain in the natural world. The Spirit descends here & there; a great company are converted; then He passes on & afterwards there follow only single conversions. ~~On the other hand~~ We can however give you joyful news lately received from our Mission Stations. At two stations in South Africa numbers have joined us - in one over 40 - in the other over 50, & still more are standing at the very door of the kingdom. Even upon the children the Holy Spirit has been poured out. Beyond the limits of the Colony of the Cape, there is a great thirst for the word of life. Also in the dark Island of Borneo the bones of the dead are in motion. Through the happy result of a war with a tribe in the interior of the Island, in which the enemy retreated without swords being drawn, the tribe among whom our brethren labor was strengthened. One of our brothers had accompanied them in their march against the enemy, & preached the gospel daily before thousands. Soon after their return the child of a Dajakkar chief was baptized. A great number of Dajakkas were present. One of the brethren preached on the holy baptism & represented by it the glory of the kingdom of heaven. The Spirit of the Lord breathed upon the assembly & made the seed powerful in the hearts of the hearers, who moreover were powerfully moved by the solemnity of the ordinance of baptism. 58 declared themselves ready to receive the gospel. 20 were taken under instruction & after that were baptized. The rest were led to wait, because it seemed to the brethren that with them the work was rather one of momentary excitement than & not a work of the Spirit, an opinion which in the case of many was confirmed. This news will be so much the more welcome as from your country also there are laborers upon this island.

Continuation of letter from Barmen

(Copy)

Now Brethren! You see that among us and by us the kingdom of God is winning its victories. Let us therefore together pray and wrestle and contend that it may be more and more promoted in us: that Christ may ever more and more change us into his image; that we ~~ever~~ may die to ourselves and to the world in order that his great name may be glorified and praised in us, around us, and by us. To him be honor, blessing praise and thanks giving forever!

In hearty love

the pupils of the Rhenish Missionary Seminary.

P.S. It will give us much pleasure if you will carry out your plan and write to us from time to time; that we may be mutually built up and strengthened in our common faith.